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I have no doubt, will be glad to hear the member's views and suggestions.

12. Opening of more veterinary hospitals in the State.

Mr. Geeverghese (Member, Quilon Taluk) said that Government were aware of the heavy losses sustained by the ryots in different parts of the State owing to the death of several of their cattle from infectious diseases. With a view to prevent similar recurrences in future, he requested that a veterinary hospital be opened in each taluk, and that if that was considered not practicable, one should be established at least in each division as advised by the Director of Agriculture.

Mr. T. N. Sivasankara Pillai (Member, Eraniel Taluk) also suggested the desirability of establishing a veterinary hospital in each taluk. As an alternative, he requested that liberal grants might be given to trained Native Vaidyans.

Dewan's reply.—The application for more veterinary hospitals is noted and would be granted consistently with the funds at the disposal of Government.

The Assembly adjourned at 2 P. M. and met again at 2-30 P. M.

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13. Settlement of cherikkal lands.

Mr. P. I. Chandy (Member, Changanachery Taluk) requested that, in consideration of the long-standing possessory rights of the cherikkal holders and in view of their present impoverished condition, the cherikkal lands might be registered in the names of the present holders on a very light tax computed on the basis of a single rice crop derivable from the lands once in every twelve years and that the ryots might also be helped with loans and demonstrations in model cultivation. He added that, as regards the latter part of his question, he was glad that Government were taking action.

Mr. P. G. Govinda Pillai (Member, Chengannur Taluk) said that the question of revising the Rules dated 23rd March 1907, for the settlement of cherikkal lands, had formed the subject of several memorials to Government. The question was also brought up at the last session of the Assembly, but he was sorry that Government had not done anything in the way of relaxing the rigidity of the rules. Under the existing rules, it was very difficult for cherikkal owners to hold their lands, as the profit out of the lands would not suffice even to meet the Government demand. The special difficulties attending

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the cultivation of cherikkal lands, the arid and inaccessible character of the ground, the profitless and fluctuating condition of the industry in bad seasons and the precarious and uncertain nature of the yield, had already been brought to the notice of Government by the members at the last session. The extension of the reserved forests to the very hearts of villages and of human habitations rendered it necessary for the people even to give up existing lands fit for cultivation.

The maximum rate of assessment fixed for cherikkals was 7 fs. per acre. If the annual yield from the lands were taken as the guiding principle in fixing the assessment, as it ought to be, the excessive rate of one rupee could never have been arrived at by any method of calculation. At pages 2, 3 and 7, Vol. III, of Mr. Nagam Aiya's State Manual, a clear exposition of the nature of cherikkal cultivation was given and they contained also a record of his observations based upon his long revenue experience of the country and the careful enquiry made by him. It would be seen that the net profit to the ryots, once in 13 years, would amount to 20 paras of paddy per para of 192 perukkams, or 45 paras per acre. This gave an average annual yield of 3½ paras of paddy, or chs. 21 according to the Government rate. Out of this amount, 7 chs. represented the Government's share. Both Mr. Shungarasubba Iyer and Mr. Ramiengar had also adopted the same system of calculation and the rate of 7 chs. had been referred to by them in their memoranda on settlement. Further, for an acre of cherikkal lands, the market value fixed by the Civil Courts was Rs. 10, which was also the rate usually paid by European planters for waste lands. Even these tests pointed to the same result. It was therefore clear that the maximum rate of 7 fs. per acre fixed by Government was very excessive and beyond the productive capacity of the soil and should therefore be reduced.

Taking the case of the jenmam cherikkals, the rate proposed, *viz.*, a moiety of that on pandaravaka cherikkals, was unjustifiable. Under the Proclamation of 1061, Government were not entitled to anything more than the rajabhogam on jenmom lands, calculated at one-eighth the assessment on pandaravaka lands. The fact that that proportion was based upon the rate of malavaram assessment for jenmom cherikkals would not by itself warrant a departure from the Proclamation. If, however, Government chose to go by the malavaram or vilameladi accounts, it was nothing but just that they should do so fully and consistently, for the malavaram rates of 3½ chs.

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per acre on Sirkar lands and 1¾ chs. on jenmam lands would then have to be regarded as the old tax on cherikkals and should not be subject to any enhancement at the present settlement. The Member therefore said that the tax on jenmom cherikkals should be reduced to one-eighth the assessment.

Another clause of the rules which worked hardship on the ryots was the recovery of the value of trees standing on cherikkal lands. There was no analogy between cherikkal lands on the one hand in which the holders had ownership and for which they were paying a tax to Government and ordinary puduvals on the other. If the tree value could not be wholly done away with, the Member requested that the following modifications in the rules might be made, in view to mitigate the hardship to some extent, *viz*, (1) that no value should be recovered from trees other than the valuable species such as Anjili, Thambakam, Thempavu and Akil; (2) that in valuing such trees, only trees above 15 vannams in girth and a minimum height to be prescribed, should be taken into account; and (3) that diseased trees should be excluded from the calculation. He said that the reasons urged in regard to tree value applied with equal force to tharavila. No tharavila on cherikkals should therefore be recovered, and even if any was to be levied, the maximum amount payable should be reduced from three years' assessment to one year's assessment. He also added that, in any case, no tree value and tharavila should be charged on jenmam cherikkals and the rules also did not explicitly provide for such recovery.

Another matter in which relief should be given to the ryots was the remission from assessment of unprofitable areas within every cherikkal holding. He suggested that a deduction of 20 per cent of the total extent should be made on that account.

The Member said that the last point which he wished to touch upon was about the enquiry as at present conducted into the cherikkals claimed by jenmies. He said that the enquiry, far from being quasi-judicial, was wholly one-sided. The applications of jenmies for copies of malavaram accounts, boundary descriptions of particular desams or defined areas, or other documents evidencing the jenmies' rights and claims, were invariably refused by Government Officers, and he failed to understand what sort of evidence the jenmies were expected to adduce under the situation to support their claims. He therefore requested that

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the enquiry in such cases might be made a fully judicial one and that copies of all records might be ordered to be furnished to the parties applying for them.

In conclusion, the Member requested that Government might be pleased to give a careful and sympathetic consideration to the above grievances of the cherikkal cultivators and take early steps to redress them as much as possible.

Dewan's reply.—The policy of His Highness' Government in regard to cherikkal cultivation was laid down in February 1907 and the Rules for the settlement of cherikkal lands were issued in March 1907. This question of cherikkals was brought up at the last session of the Assembly and I then said that I would go through it with Mr. Kuruvila, the member who brought it up, and see how matters stood. I did so, soon after the last Assembly was over, and I came to the conclusion that the lines on which my predecessor, Mr. Gopalachariar, had proceeded were right and that they should not be altered. Agreeably to the orders already issued, cherikkal settlement is making rapid progress. I have now again read the papers, and I have also considered what the two members have now said, and I must say that we are not prepared to make any material changes now in the rules.

The question of levying acreage value and tree value from jenmam cherikkals is under reference to Government and orders will soon issue on this question. The attention of the Settlement Peishcar will be drawn to the complaints made by Mr. Govinda Pillai about the way in which the orders of Government are, according to the Member, being carried out by the Settlement department.

II. Law, Justice and Police.

14. Necessity for the introduction of standard weights and measures throughout the State.

Mr. T. M. Chithambarathanu Pillai (Member, Tovala Taluk) said that there was at present no uniformity in the weights and measures in use in the State and that the people were put to great hardship and loss in consequence. He therefore requested that, as in British India, standard weights and measures might be prescribed and issued duly stamped with the Government seal as early as possible.

Dewan's reply.—Mr. Sankara Menon, one of the official members of the Legislative Council, has been asked to introduce a Bill for regulating weights and measures.

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